

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3-6, and 8-10 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 3-6, 8, and 10 are amended; and Claims 2 and 7 are canceled by the present amendment. No new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,558,324 to Von Behren et al.; Claims 1 and 6 were rejected by 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,839,441 to Steinberg; Claims 1 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Von Behren et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,474,070 to Ophir et al.; Claims 1 and 6 were further rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Steinberg, and further in view of Ophir et al.; Claims 4 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Von Behren et al. alone or further in view of Ophir et al., and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,876,342 to Chen et al.; Claims 4 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Steinberg alone or further in view of Ophir et al., and further in view of Chen et al.; and Claims 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, and 10 were objected to but indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicant appreciatively acknowledges the indication of allowable subject matter.

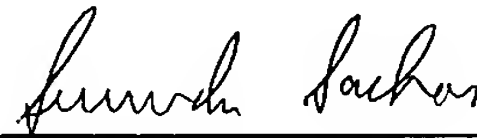
In response to the objection to Claims 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, and 10, Applicant has amended Claim 1 to recite the allowable subject matter of Claim 2. Claim 2 has been canceled. Similarly, Applicant has amended Claim 6 to recite the allowable subject matter of Claim 7. Claim 7 has been canceled. Accordingly, Claims 3 and 5 have been amended to depend from Claim 1, and Claims 8 and 10 have been amended to depend from Claim 6.

Having amended all independent claims to be in allowable form in light of the allowable subject matter of Claims 2 and 7 indicated in the Office Action, Applicant respectfully submits that the 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), and 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections have all been rendered moot by the amendments to Claims 1 and 6. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that independent Claims 1 and 6 (and all associated dependent claims) are allowable.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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